THE MARX HE KNEW

N SPARGO

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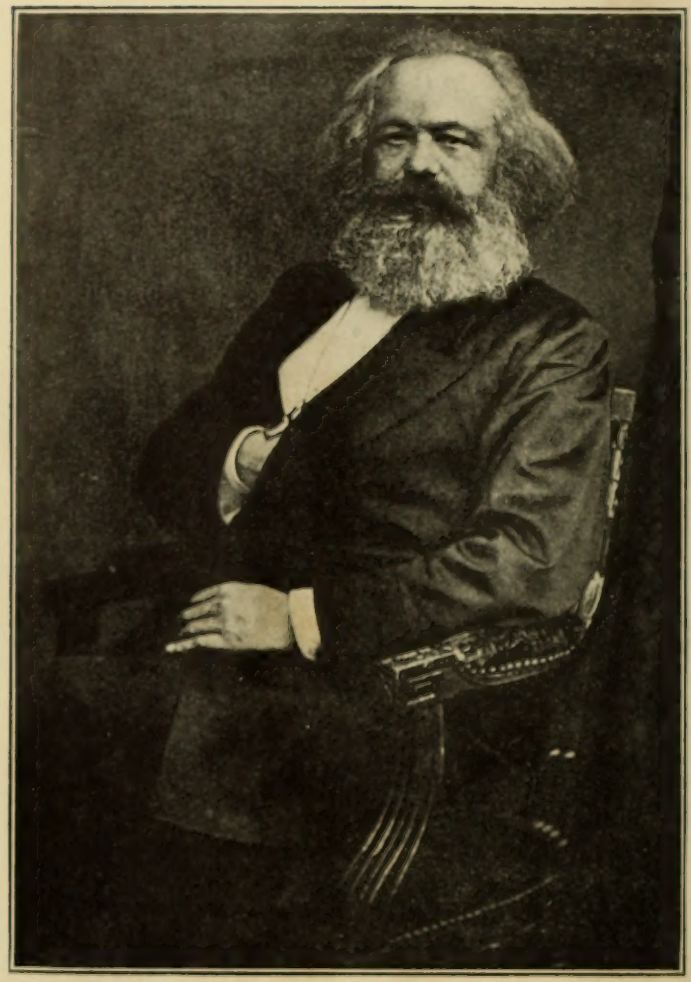

KARL MARX.

The Marx He Knew

BY

JOHN SPARGO

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TO

MADAME LAURA LAFARGUE

DAUGHTER OF KARL MARX

List of Illustrations

THE MARX HE KNEW

I

The pale, yellow light of the waning day streamed through the dusty window panes of the little cigar shop, and across the bench where old Hans Fritzsche worked and hummed the melody of *Der Freiheit* the while.

The Young Comrade who sat in the corner upon a three-legged stool seemed not to hear the humming. His eyes were fixed upon a large photograph of a man which hung in a massive oak frame above the bench where Old Hans rolled cigars into shape. The photograph was old and faded, and the written inscription beneath it was scarcely legible. The gaze of the Young Comrade was wistful and reverent.

"Tell me about *him*, Hans," he said at last.

Old Hans stopped humming and looked at the Young Comrade. Then his eyes wandered to the portrait and rested upon it in a gaze that was likewise full of tender reverence.

Neither spoke again for several seconds and only the monotonous ticking of the clock upon the wall broke the oppressive silence.

"Ach! he was a wonderful man, my comrade," said Old Hans at length.

"Yes, yes, he was a wonderful man—one of the most wonderful men that ever lived," responded the Young Comrade in a voice that was vibrant with religious enthusiasm.

Both were silent again for a moment and then the Young Comrade continued: "Yes, Marx was a wonderful man, Hans. And you knew him—saw him

smile—heard him speak—clasped his hand—called him comrade and friend!"

"Aye, many times, many times," answered Old Hans, nodding. "Hundreds of times did we smoke and drink together—me and him."

"Ah, that was a glorious privilege, Hans," said the Young Comrade fervently. "To hear him speak and touch his hand—the hand that wrote such great truths for the poor working people—I would have gladly died, Hans. Why, even when I touch your hand now, and think that it held *his* hand so often, I feel big—strong—inspired."

"Ach, but my poor old hand is nothing," answered Old Hans with a deprecating smile. "Touching the hand of such a man matters nothing at all, for genius is not contagious like the smallpox," he added.

"But tell me about him, Hans," plead-

ed the Young Comrade again. "Tell me how he looked and spoke—tell me everything."

"Well, you see, we played together as boys in the Old Country, in Treves. Many a time did we fight then! Once he punched my eye and made it swell up so that I could hardly see at all, but I punched his nose and made it bleed like—well, like a pig."

"What! you made him *bleed?*"

"Ach! that was not much; all boys fight so."

"Well?"

"My father was a shoemaker, you see, and we lived not far away from where Karl's people lived. Many a time my father sent me to their house—on the Bruckergrasse — with mended shoes. Then I would see Karl, who was just as big as I was, but not so old by a year.

BIRTHPLACE OF KARL MARX.

Such a fine boy! Curly-headed he was, and fat—like a little barrel almost.

"So, when I took the shoes sometimes I would stop and play with him a bit—play with Karl and the girls. He was always playing with girls—with his sister, Sophie, and little Jenny von Westphalen.

"Sometimes I liked it not so—playing with girls. They were older than we boys and wanted everything to go their way, and I liked not that girls should boss boys. So once I teased him about it—told him that he was a baby to play with girls. Then it was that we fought and he gave me a black eye and I gave him a bloody nose in return.

"Sometimes the Old Man, Karl's father, would come into my father's shop and stay a long while chatting. He was a lawyer and father only a shoemaker; he was quite rich, while father

was poor, terribly poor. But it made no difference to Herr Marx. He would chat with father by the hour.

"You see, he was born a Jew, but—before Karl was born—he turned Christian. Father had done the same thing, years before I was born. Why he did it father would never tell me, but once I heard him and Heinrich Marx—that was the name of Karl's father—talking about it, so I got a pretty good idea of the reason.

" 'Of course, I am not a believer in the Christian doctrines, friend Wilhelm.' he said to my father. 'I don't believe that Jesus was God, nor that he was a Messiah from God. But I do believe in a God—in one God and no more.

" 'And I'm not so dishonorable as to have become a Christian, and to have had my children baptized as Christians, simply to help me in my profession,' he

said. 'Some of our Hebrew friends have said that, but it is not true at all. As I see it, friend Wilhelm, Judaism is too narrow, too conservative. Christianity makes for breadth, for culture, for freedom. And it is keeping to ourselves, a people set apart, which makes us Jews hated and despised, strangers in the land. To become one with all our fellow citizens, to break down the walls of separation, is what we need to aim at. That is why I forsook Judaism, Wilhelm.'

"From the way that father nodded his head and smiled I could tell, though he said little, that he was the same sort of a Christian."

"But it was about *him*, the son, that you were speaking, Hans."

"Ach, be patient. Time is more plentiful than money, boy," responded Hans, somewhat testily.

"Well, of course, we went to the same school, and though Karl was younger than me we were in the same class. Such a bright, clever fellow he was! Always through with his lessons before any of the rest of us, he was, and always at the top of the class. And the stories he could tell, lad! Never did I hear such stories. In the playground before school opened we used to get around him and make him tell stories till our hair stood on end."

"And was his temper cheerful and good—was he well liked?" asked the Young Comrade.

"Liked? He was the favorite of the whole school, teachers and all, my boy. Never was he bad tempered or mean. Nobody ever knew Karl to do a bad thing. But he was full of mischief and good-hearted fun. He loved to play

tricks upon other boys, and sometimes upon the teachers, too.

"He could write the funniest verses about people you ever heard in your life, and sometimes all the boys and girls in the school would be shouting his rhymes as they went through the streets. If another boy did anything to him, Karl would write some verses that made the fellow look like a fool, and we would all recite them just to see the poor fellow get mad. Such fun we had then. But, I tell you, we were awfully afraid of Karl's pin-pricking verses!

"Once, I remember well, we had a bad-tempered old teacher. He was a crabbed old fellow, and all the boys got to hate him. Always using the rod, he was. Karl said to me one day as we were going home from school: 'The crooked old sinner! I'll make him wince with some verses before long, Hans,'

and then we both laughed till we were sore."

"And did he write the verses?" asked the Young Comrade.

"Write them? I should say he did! You didn't know Karl, or you would never ask such a question as that. Next morning, when we got in school, Karl handed around a few copies of his poem about old Herr von Holst, and pretty soon we were all tittering. The whole room was in a commotion.

"Of course, the teacher soon found out what was wrong and Karl was called outside and asked to explain about them. 'I'm a poet, Herr teacher,' he said, 'and have a poet's license. You must not ask a poet to explain.' Of course, we all laughed at that, and the poor Herr von Holst was like a great mad bull."

"And was he disciplined?"

"To be sure he was! His father was very angry, too. But what did we care about that? We sang the verses on the streets, and wrote them on the walls or anywhere else that we could. We made it so hot for the poor teacher that he had to give up and leave the town. I wish I could remember the verses, but I never was any good for remembering poetry, and it was a long, long time ago —more than three score years ago now.

"We thought it was funny that Karl never gave over playing with the girls —his sister and Jenny von Westphalen. When we were all big boys and ashamed to be seen playing with girls, he would play with them just the same, and sometimes when we asked him to play with us he would say, 'No, boys, I'm going to play with Jenny and Sophie this afternoon.' We'd be mad enough at this, for he was a good fellow to have

in a game, and sometimes we would try to tease him out of it. But he could call names better than we could, and then we were all afraid of his terrible verses. So we let him alone lest he make us look silly with his poetry.

"Well, I left school long before Karl did. My father was poor, you see, and there were nine of us children to feed and clothe, so I had to go to work. But I always used to be hearing of Karl's cleverness. People would talk about him in father's shop and say, 'That boy Marx will be a Minister of State some day.'

"By and by we heard that he had gone to Bonn, to the University, and everybody thought that he would soon become a great man. Father was puzzled when Heinrich Marx came in one day and talked very sadly about Karl. He said that Karl had wasted all his time at

JOHANNA BERTHA JULIE JENNY VON WESTPHALEN.

Bonn and learned nothing, only getting into a bad scrape and spending a lot of money. Father tried to cheer him up, but he was not to be comforted. 'My Karl—the child in whom all my hopes were centered—the brightest boy in Treves—is a failure,' he said over and over again.

"Soon after that Karl came home and I saw him nearly every day upon the streets. He was most always with Jenny von Westphalen, and people smiled and nodded their heads when the two passed down the street. My! What a handsome couple they made! Jenny was the beauty of the town, and all the young men were crazy about her. They wrote poems about her and called her all the names of the goddesses, but she had no use for any of the fellows except Karl. And he was as handsome a fellow as ever laughed into a girl's eyes. He was

tall and straight as a line, and had the most wonderful eyes I ever saw in my life. They seemed to dance whenever he smiled, but sometimes they flashed fire — when he was vexed, I mean. But I suppose that what the girls liked best was his great mass of coal black curls.

"The girls raved about Karl, and he could have had them all at his feet if he would. I know, for I had two sisters older than myself, and I heard how they and their friends used to talk about him. But Karl had no eyes for any girl but Jenny, except it was his sister.

"Folks all said that Karl and Jenny would marry. Rachel—that's my oldest sister—said so one night at the supper table, but our good mother laughed at her. 'No, Rachel, they'll never marry,' she said. 'Jenny might be willing enough, but the old Baron will never let

her do it. Karl's father is rich alongside of poor people like us, but poor enough compared with Jenny's father. Karl is no match for the beautiful Jenny.'

"Then father spoke up. 'You forget, mother, that Heinrich Marx is the best friend that old Baron von Westphalen has, and that the Baron is as fond of Karl as of Jenny. And anyway he loves Jenny so much that he'd be sure to let her marry whoever she loved, even if the man had not a thaler to his name.'

"Soon Karl went away again to the University at Berlin, not back to Bonn. Thought he'd get on better at Berlin, I suppose. He might have been gone a year or more when his father came into father's little shop one day while I was there. He said that Karl wasn't doing as well at Berlin as he had expected. He tried to laugh it off, saying that the boy was in love and would probably

settle down to work soon and come out all right, upon top as usual.

"It was then that we learned for the first time that Karl and Jenny were betrothed, and that the old Baron had given his blessing to his daughter and her lover. Very soon all the gossips of the town were talking about it. Some said that there had been quite a romance about it; that the young folks had been secretly engaged for nearly a year, being afraid that the Baron would object. 'Twas even said that Karl had been made ill by the strain of keeping the secret. Then, when at last Karl wrote to old Westphalen about it, and asked for Jenny in a manly fashion, the old fellow laughed and said that he had always hoped it would turn out that way. So the silly young couple had suffered a lot of pain which they could have avoided.

"Of course, lots of folks said that it wasn't a 'good match,' that Jenny von Westphalen could have married somebody a lot richer than Karl; but they all had to admit that she couldn't get a handsomer or cleverer man than Karl in all the Rhine Province.

"But things seemed to be going badly enough with Karl at the University. Herr Heinrich Marx cried in our little shop one evening when my father asked him how Karl was doing. He said that, instead of studying hard to be a Doctor of Laws, as he ought to do, Karl was wasting his time. 'He writes such foolish letters that I am ashamed of him,' said the old man. 'Wastes his time writing silly verses and romances and then destroying most of them; talks about becoming a second Goethe, and says he will write the great Prussian drama that will revive dramatic art.

He spends more money than the sons of the very rich, and I fear that he has got into bad company and formed evil habits.'

"Then father spoke up. 'Don't be afraid,' he said. 'I'll wager that Karl is all right, and that he will do credit to the old town yet. Some of our greatest men have failed to pass their examinations in the universities you know, Herr Marx, while some of the most brilliant students have done nothing worthy of note after leaving the universities crowned with laurels. There is nothing bad about Karl, of that you may be sure.'

"The old man could hardly speak. He took father's hand and shook it heartily: 'May it be so, friend Wilhelm, may it be so,' he said. I never saw the old man again, for soon after that he died.

"Karl came home that Easter, looking pale and worn and thin. I was shocked when he came to see me, so grave and sad was he. We went over to the old Roman ruins, and he talked about his plans. He had given up all hopes of being a great poet then and wanted to get a Doctor's degree and become a Professor at the University. I reminded him of the verses he wrote about some of the boys at school, and about the old teacher, Herr von Holst, and we laughed like two careless boys. He stood upon a little mound and recited the verses all over as though they had been written only the week before. Ach, he looked grand that night in the beautiful moonlight!

"Then came his father's death, and I did not see him again, except as the funeral passed by. He went back to Berlin to the University, and I went

soon after that away from home for my wanderjahre, and for a long time heard nothing about Karl.

II

"Two or three years after that I was working in Cologne, where I had a sweetheart, when I read in a paper, the *Rhenische Zeitung*, that there would be a democratic meeting. I liked the democratic ideas which I found in the paper, for they were all in the interest of poor toilers like myself. So I made up my mind to go to the meeting.

"So that night I went to the meeting and listened to the speeches. Presently *he* came in. I didn't see him at first, but heard a slight noise back of me and heard someone near me say 'Here comes Doctor Marx.' Then I turned and saw

Karl making his way to the front, all eyes fastened upon him. I could see in a moment that he was much beloved.

"Then Karl made a speech. He was not a great orator, but spoke clearly and right to the point in very simple language. The speaker who spoke before him was very eloquent and fiery, and stirred the audience to a frenzy. But never a sound of applause greeted Karl's speech; he was listened to in perfect silence.

"This made me feel that Karl's speech was a great failure, but next day I found that the only words I remembered of all that were spoken that evening were the words Karl spoke. It was the same way with the other men in the shop where I worked. As they discussed the meeting next day, it was Karl's speech they remembered and discussed. That was like Karl: he had

a way somehow of saying things you couldn't forget.

"When the meeting was over I was slinking away without speaking to him. I suppose that I was bashful and a bit afraid of the grave 'Doctor Marx,' the great man. But he saw me going out and shouted my name. 'Wait a minute, Hans Fritzsche,' he cried, and came running to me with outstretched hands. Then he insisted upon introducing me to all the leaders. 'This is my good friend, Herr Fritzsche, with whom I went to school,' he said to them.

"Nothing would satisfy him but that I should go with the other leaders and himself for a little wine, and though I was almost afraid lest in such company I seem foolish, I went. You should have heard Karl talk to those leaders, my boy! It was wonderful, and I sat and drank in every word. One of the

great men was urging that the time had come for some desperate action. 'Nothing but a bloody revolution can help the working people, Herr Marx,' he said. But Karl smiled quietly, and I thought I could see the old scornful curl of his lip as he said: 'Revolution? Yes, but not yet, Herr, not yet, and perhaps not a bloody one at all.' Ach, what quiet power seemed to go with his words!

"After the little crowd broke up Karl took me with him to his office. Then I learned that he was the editor of the *Rhenische Zeitung,* and that the articles I had read in the paper pleading for the poor and oppressed and denouncing the government were written by him. I felt almost afraid of him then, so wonderful it seemed that he should have become so great and wise. But Karl soon put all my fears to rest, and made

me forget everything except that we were boys from home enjoying the memories of old times.

"Well, I saw him often after that, for I joined the Democratic Club. Then the government suppressed the paper, and Karl went away to Paris. Before he went he came to say good bye and told me that he was to marry Jenny von Westphalen before going to Paris, and I told him that I was going to marry, too.

"But we never thought that we should meet each other upon our honeymoons, as we did. I was at Bingen with my Barbara the day after our wedding when I heard someone calling my name, and when I turned to see who it was that called me there stood Karl and his Jenny laughing at me and my Barbara, and all of us were blushing like idiots. Such

happy days those were that we spent at old Bingen!

"I went back to Cologne, to work in the shop belonging to my Barbara's father, and Karl went to Paris. That was in forty-three. We heard from him sometimes, and later on we used to get copies of a paper, *Vorwarts,* which published articles by Karl and other great men. Bakunin wrote for it, I remember, and so did Heine and Herwegh, our sweet singers.

"That paper was stopped, too. We heard that Guizot had suppressed the paper and ordered Karl and some of the other writers to be expelled from France. It was Alexander von Humboldt who persuaded Guizot, so it was said. I got a letter from Karl to say that he had settled in Brussels with his wife and that there was a baby, a lit-

tle Jenny, eight months old. Our little Barbara was just the same age.

"Not long after that letters came to the club asking for Karl's address. They were from Engels, of whom I had never heard before. I would not give the address until we found out that Engels was a true friend and comrade. We were all afraid, you see, lest some enemy wanted to hurt Karl. It was good, though, that I could send the address to Engels, for I believe that he sent some money to help Karl out of a very hard struggle. If we had known that he was in trouble we, his friends in Cologne, would have sent money to help, but Karl was too proud I suppose to let his trouble be known to us.

III.

"It was in the winter of 1847 that I

FREDERICK ENGELS.

aw him again, in London. For months ll the workingmen's societies had been gitated over the question of forming n international association with a egular programme, which Karl had een invited to draw up. A congress as to be held in London for the pur- ose of considering Karl's programme nd I was sent by the Cologne comrades s a delegate. All the members 'chip- ed in' to pay my expenses, and I was ery happy to go—happy because I hould see him again.

"So I was present at the rooms of he Arbeiterbildungsverein, in Great Vindmill Street, when Karl read the eclaration of principles and programme e had prepared. That was the *Com- unist Manifesto,* you know."

"What! were you really present when hat immortal declaration of the inde- endence of our class was read, Hans?"

"Aye, lad, I was present during all the ten days the congress lasted. Never, never shall I forget how our Karl read that declaration. Like a man inspired he was. I, who have heard Bernstein and Niemann and many another great actor declaim the lines of famous classics, never heard such wonderful declamation as his. We all sat spell-bound and still as death while he read. Tears of joy trickled down my cheeks, and not mine alone. When he finished reading there was the wildest cheering. I lost control of myself and kissed him on both cheeks, again and again. He liked not that, for he was always ashamed to have a fuss made over him.

"But Karl—he always insisted that I should call him 'Karl,' as in boyhood days—had shown us that day his inner self; bared the secret of his heart, you might say. The workers of all countries

must unite—only just that, unite! And that night, after the long session of the congress, when he took me away with Engels and a few other friends—I remember that Karl Pfander was one—he could speak of little else: the workers must be united somehow, and whoever proposed further divisions instead of unity must be treated as a traitor.

"Some there were who had not his patience. Few men have, my lad, for his was the patience of a god. They wanted 'action,' 'action,' 'action,' and some of them pretended that Karl was just a plain coward, afraid of action. There was one little delegate, a Frenchman, who tried to get me to vote against the 'coward Marx'—me that had known Karl since we were little shavers together, and that knew him to be fearless and lion-hearted. I just picked the creature up and shook him like a ter-

rier shakes a rat and he squealed bitterly. I don't think he called Karl a coward again during the congress.

"Of course, Karl had courage enough for anything. But he was too wise to imagine that any good could come from a few thousand untrained workingmen, armed with all sorts of implements, dangerous most to themselves, challenging the trained hosts of capitalist troops. That was the old idea of 'Revolution,' you know, and it took more courage to advocate the long road of patience than it would take to join in a silly riot. And Karl showed them that, too, by his calm look and scornful treatment of their cry for 'action.' The way he silenced the noisy followers of Wilhelm Weitling—who was not a bad fellow, mind—was simply wonderful to see. Oh, he was a born leader of men, was Karl.

"When the congress was all over, I

meant to stay a few days in London to see the great city. Barbara had a sister living over in Dean street and so it would cost me nothing to stay. But Karl came to me and begged me to go back by way of Brussels. He and Engels were returning there at once, and would like to have me go with them. I didn't want to go at first, but when Karl said that there were some messages he wanted me to take back to Cologne, why, of course, I went.

"Ach, what a glorious time we had on that journey to Brussels! Sometimes Karl and Engels would talk seriously about the great cause, and I just listened and kept my mouth shut while my ears were wide open. At other times they would throw off their seriousness as a man throws off a coat, and then they would tell stories and sing songs, and of course I joined in. People say—

people that never knew the real Karl—that he was gloomy and sad, that he couldn't smile. I suppose that is because they never saw the simple Karl that I knew and loved, but only Marx, the great leader and teacher, with a thousand heavy problems burdening his mind. But the Marx that I knew—my friend Karl—was human, boy, very human. He could sing a song, tell a good story, and enjoy a joke, even at his own expense."

A smile lit up the face of the Young Comrade. "I'm so glad of that, Hans," he said. "I've always been told that he was a sad man, without a sense of humor; that he was never known to unbend from his stiff gravity. But you say that he was not so; that he could laugh and joke and sing: I like him better so."

Old Hans seemed not to hear the

words of the Young Comrade, though he was silent while they were spoken. A faint smile played around his lips, and the far-away expression of his eyes told that the smile belonged to the memory of other days. It was dark now in the little shop; only the flickering light of the fitful fire in the tiny grate enabled the Young Comrade to see his friend.

It was the Young Comrade who broke the silence at last: "Tell me more, Hans, for I am still hungry to learn about him."

The old man nodded and turned to put some chips upon the fire in the grate. Then he continued:

"It was about the last of February, 1848, that we got the first copies of the *Communist Manifesto* at Cologne. Only a day or two before that we had news of the outbreak of the Revolution in Paris. I have still my copy of the

Manifesto which Karl sent me from Paris.

"You see, he had been expelled from Brussels by order of the Government. Prussia had requested this, so Karl wrote me, and he was arrested and ordered to leave Belgium at once. So he went at once to Paris. Only a week before that the Provisional Government had sent him an official invitation to come back to the city from which Guizot had expelled him. It was like a conqueror that he went, you may imagine.

"Boy, you can never understand what we felt in those days. Things are not so any more. We all thought that the day of our victory was surely nigh. Karl had made us believe that when things started in France the proletariat of all Europe would awaken: 'When the Gallican cock crows the German workers will rise,' he used to say. And now the

cock's crowing had been heard! The Revolution was successful in France—so we thought—and the people were planting trees of liberty along the boulevards.

"Here in England, too, the Spirit of the Revolution was abroad with her flaming torch. The Chartists had come together, and every day we expected to hear that the monarchy had been overthrown and a Social Republic established. Of course, we knew that Chartism was a 'bread and butter question' at the bottom, and that the Chartists' cause was ours.

"Well, now that we had heard the Gallican cock, we wanted to get things started in Germany, too. Every night we held meetings at the club in Cologne to discuss the situation. Some of us wanted to begin war at once. You see, the Revolution was in our blood like

strong wine: we were drunk with the spirit, lad.

"When Karl wrote that we must wait, that we must have patience, there was great disappointment. We thought that we should begin at once, and there were some who said that Karl was afraid, but I knew that they were wrong, and told them so. There was a fierce discussion at the meeting one night over a letter which I had received from Karl, and which he wanted me to read to the members.

"George Herwegh was in Paris, so the letter said, and was trying hard to raise a legion of German workingmen to march into the Fatherland and begin the fight. This, Karl said, was a terrible mistake. It was useless, to begin with, for what could such a legion of tailors and cigarmakers and weavers do against the Prussian army? It was

plain that the legion would be annihilated. Besides, it would hurt the cause in another way by taking out of Paris thousands of good revolutionists who were needed there.

" 'Tell the comrades,' he wrote, 'that it is not a question of cowardice or fear, but of wisdom. It takes more courage to live for the long struggle than to go out and be shot.' He wanted the comrades to wait patiently and to do all they could to persuade their friends in Paris not to follow Herwegh's advice. Most of the Germans in Paris followed Karl's advice, but a few followed Herwegh and marched into Baden later on, to be scattered by the regular troops as chaff is scattered by the wind.

"The German comrades in Paris sent us a special manifesto, which Karl wrote, and we were asked to distribute it among the working people. That

would be a good way to educate the workers, Karl wrote to our committee, but I tell you it seemed a very small thing to do in those trying times, and it didn't satisfy the comrades who were demanding more radical revolutionary action. Why, even I seemed to forget Karl's advice for a little while.

"On the 13th of March—you'll remember that was the day on which more than a hundred thousand Chartists gathered on Kennington Common—the revolution broke out in Vienna. Then things began to move in Cologne, too. As soon as the news came from Vienna, August von Willich, who had been an artillery officer, led a big mob right into the Cologne Council Chamber. I was in the mob and shouted as loud as anybody. We demanded that the authorities should send a petition to the King,

in the name of the city, demanding freedom and constitutional government.

"And then on the 18th, the same day that saw the people of Berlin fighting behind barricades in the streets—a great multitude of us Cologne men marched through the streets, led by Professor Gottfried Kinkel, singing the *Marseillaise* and carrying the forbidden flag of revolution, the black, red and gold tricolor."

"And where was he—Marx—during all this time?" asked the Young Comrade.

"In Paris with Engels. We thought it strange that he should be holding aloof from the great struggle, and even I began to lose faith in him. He had told us that the crowing of the Gallican cock would be the sign for the revolution to begin, yet he was silent. It was not till later that I learned from his

own lips that he saw from the start that the revolution would be crushed; that the workers opportunity would not come until later.

IV.

"He told me that when he came to Cologne with Engels. That was either the last of April or the beginning of May, I forget which. My wife rushed in one evening and said that she had seen Karl going up the street. I had heard that he was expected, but thought it would not be for several days. So when Barbara said that she had seen him on the street, I put on my things in a big hurry and rushed off to the club. There was a meeting that night, and I felt pretty sure that Karl would get there.

"Aye, that night and many times after that. Karl greeted me warmly and introduced me to Lassalle. Then we went out for a drink of lager beer—just us four—Karl, Lassalle, Engels and me. They told me that they had come to start another paper in the place of the one that had been suppressed five years before. Money had been promised to start it, Karl was to be the chief editor and Engels his assistant. The new paper was to be called the *Neue Rhenische Zeitung* and Freiligrath, George Weerth, Lassalle, and many others, were to write for it. So we drank a toast to the health and prosperity of the new paper.

"Well, the paper came out all right, and it was not long before Karl's attacks upon the government brought trouble upon it. The middle class stockholders felt that he was too radical, and

when he took the part of the French workers, after the terrible defeat of June, they wanted to get rid of their chief editor. There was no taming a man like Karl.

"One day I went down to the office with a notice for a committee of which I was a member, and Karl introduced me to Michael Bakunin, the great Russian Anarchist leader. Karl never got along very well with Bakunin and there was generally war going on between them.

"Did you ever hear of Robert Blum, my lad? Ever read the wonderful verses Freiligrath wrote about him? I suppose not. Well, Blum was a moderate Democrat, a sort of Liberal who belonged to the Frankfort National Assembly. When the insurrection of October, 1848, broke out in Vienna Blum was sent there by the National As-

sembly, the so-called 'parliament of the people.'

"He assumed command of the revolutionary forces and was captured and taken prisoner by the Austrian army and ordered to be shot. I remember well the night of the ninth of February when the atrocious deed was committed. We had a great public meeting. The hall was crowded to suffocation. I looked for Karl, but he was nowhere to be seen. He was a very busy man, you see, and had to write a great deal for his paper at night.

"It was getting on for ten o'clock when Karl appeared in the hall and made his way in silence to the platform. Some of the comrades applauded him, but he raised his hand to silence them. We saw then that he held a telegram in his hand, and that his face was as pale as death itself. We knew that

something terrible had happened, and a great hush fell over the meeting. Not a sound could be heard until Karl began to read.

"The telegram was very brief and very terrible. Robert Blum had been shot to death in Vienna, according to martial law, it said. Karl read it with solemn voice, and I thought that I could see the murder taking place right there in the hall before my eyes. I suppose everybody felt just like that, for there was perfect silence—the kind of silence that is painful—for a few seconds. Then we all broke out in a perfect roar of fury and cheers for the Revolution.

"I tried to speak to Karl after the meeting, but he brushed me aside and hurried away. His face was terrible to behold. He was the Revolution itself in human shape. As I looked at him I

knew that he would live to avenge poor Blum.

"Blum's death was followed by the *coup de' etat.* The King appointed a new ministry and the National Assembly was dissolved. The *Neue Rhenische Zeitung* came out then with a notice calling upon all citizens to forcibly resist all attempts to collect taxes from them. That meant war, of course, war to the knife, and we all knew it.

"Karl was arrested upon a charge of treason, inciting people to armed resistance to the King's authority. We all feared that it would go badly with him. There was another trial, too, Karl and Engels and a comrade named Korff, manager of the paper, were placed on trial for criminal libel. I went to this trial and heard Karl make the speech for the defence. The galleries were

crowded and when he got through they applauded till the rafters shook. 'If Marx can make a speech like that at the 'treason' trial, no jury will convict,' was what everybody in the galleries said.

"When we got outside—oh, I forgot to say that the three defendants were acquitted, didn't I? Well, when we got outside, I told Karl what all the comrades, and many who were not comrades at all, were saying about his defence. He was pleased to hear it, I believe, but all that he would say was, 'I shall do much better than that, Hans, much better than that. Unless I'm mistaken, I can make the public prosecutor look like an idiot, Hans.'

"You can bet that I was at the 'treason' trial two days later. I pressed Karl's hand as he went in, and he looked back and winked at me as mischievously as possible, but said not a word. The

lawyers for the government bitterly attacked Karl and the two other members of the executive of the Democratic Club who were arrested with him. But their abuse was mostly for Karl. He was the one they were trying to strike down, any fool could see that.

"Well, when the case for the prosecution was all in, Karl began to talk to the jury. He didn't make a speech exactly, but just talked as he always did when he sat with a few friends over a glass of lager. In a chatty sort of way, he explained the law to the jury, showed where the clever lawyers for the government had made big mistakes, and proved that he knew the law better than they did. After that he gave them a little political lecture, you might say. He explained to them just how he looked at the political questions—always from the standpoint of the working people.

"Sitting beside me was an old man, a Professor of Law they told me he was. He sat there with his eyes fastened upon Karl, listening with all his ears to every word. 'Splendid! Splendid! Wonderful logic,' I heard him say to himself. 'What a lawyer that man would make!' I watched the faces of the jury and it was plain to see that Karl was making a deep impression upon them, though they were all middle class men. Even the old judge forgot himself and nodded and smiled when Karl's logic made the prosecution look foolish. You could see that the old judge was admiring the wonderful mind of the man before him.

"Well, the three prisoners were acquitted by the jury and Karl was greatly pleased when the jury sent one of their members over to say that they had passed a vote of thanks to 'Doctor Marx'

for the very interesting and instructive lecture he had given them. I tell you, boy, I was prouder than ever of Karl after that, and went straight home and wrote letters to half a dozen people in Treves that I knew, telling them all about Karl's great speech. You see, I knew that he would never send word back there, and I wanted everybody in the old town to know that Karl was making a great name in the world.

"The government got to be terribly afraid of Karl after that trial, and when revolutionary outbreaks occurred all through the Rhine Province, the following May, they suppressed the paper and expelled Karl from Prussia.

"We had a meeting of the executive committee to consider what was to be done. Karl said that he was going to Paris at once, and that his wife and children would follow next day. Engels

was going into the Palatinate of Bavaria to fight in the ranks, with Annecke, Kinkel, and Carl Schurz. All the debts in connection with the paper had been paid, he told us, so that no dishonor could attach to its memory.

"It was not until afterward that we heard how the debts of the paper had been paid. Karl had pawned all the silver things belonging to his wife, and sold lots of furniture and things to get the money to pay the debts. They were not *his* debts at all, and if they were his expulsion would have been a very good reason for leaving the debts unpaid. But he was not one of that kind. Honest as the sun, he was. It was just like him to make the debts his own, and to pinch himself and his family to pay them. More than once Karl and his family had to live on dry bread in Cologne in order to keep the paper

going. My Barbara found out once in some way that Karl's wife and baby didn't have enough to eat, and when she came home and told me we both cried ourselves to sleep because of it."

"Could none of the comrades help them, Hans?"

"Ach, that was pretty hard, my boy, for Karl was very proud, and I guess Jenny was prouder still. Barbara and I put our heads together and says she: 'We must put some money in a letter and send it to him somehow, in a way that he will never know where it came from, Hans.' Karl knew my writing, but not Barbara's, so she wrote a little letter and put in all the money she had saved up. 'This is from a loyal comrade who knows that Doctor Marx and his family are in need of it,' she wrote. Then we got a young comrade who was unknown to Karl and Engels

to deliver the letter to Karl just as he was leaving for his office one morning.

"Barbara and I were very happy that day when we knew that Karl had received the money, but bless your life I don't believe it did him any good at all. He just gave it away."

"Gave away the money—that was giving away his children's bread—almost. Did he do *that?*"

"Well, all I know is that I heard next day that Karl had visited that same evening, a comrade who was sick and poor and in deep distress, and that when he was leaving he had pressed money into the hand of the comrade's wife, telling her to get some good food and wine for her sick husband. And the amount of the money he gave her was exactly the same as that we had sent to him in the morning.

"Karl was always so. He was the

gentlest, kindest-hearted man I ever knew in my life. He could suffer in silence himself, never complaining, but he could not stand the sight of another's misery. He'd stop anything he was doing and go out into the street to comfort a crying child. Many and many a time have I seen him stop on the street to watch the children at play, or to pick up some crying little one in his great strong arms and comfort it against his breast. Never could he keep pennies in his pocket; they all went to comfort the children he met on the streets. Why, when he went to his office in the mornings he would very often have from two to half a dozen children clinging around him, strange children who had taken a fancy to him because he smiled kindly at them and patted their heads.

"I heard nothing from Karl for quite a while after he went to Paris. We won-

dered, Barbara and I, why he did not write. Then, one day, about three months after he had gone to Paris, came a letter from London and we saw at once that it was in his handwriting. He'd been expelled from Paris again and compelled to leave the city within twenty-four hours, and he and his family were staying in cheap lodgings in Camberwell. He said that everything was going splendidly, but never a word did he say about the terrible poverty and hardship from which they were suffering.

V

"Well, a few months after that, I managed to get into trouble with the authorities at Cologne, along with a few other comrades. We heard that we were to be arrested and knew that we could

expect no mercy. So Barbara and I talked things over and we decided to clear out at once, and go to London. We sold our few things to a good comrade, and with the money made our way at once to join Barbara's sister in Dean street. I never dreamed that we should find Karl living next door to us.

"But we did. Nobody told me about him—I suppose that nobody in our house knew who he was—but a few days after we arrived I saw him pass and ran out and called to him. My, he looked so thin and worn out that my heart ached! But he was glad to see me and grasped my hand with both of his. Karl could shake hands in a way that made you feel he loved you more than anybody else in all the world.

"In a little while he had told me enough for me to understand why he was so pale and thin. If it were not

for hurting his feelings, I could have cried at the things he told me. He and the beautiful Jenny without food sometimes, and no bed to lie upon! And it seemed all the worse to me because I knew how well they had been reared, how they had been used to solid comfort and even luxury.

"But it was not from Karl that I learned the worst. He was always trying to hide the worst. Never did I hear of such a man as he was for turning things bright side upwards. But Conrad Schramm, who was related to Barbara —a sort of second cousin, I think— lodged in the same house with us. Schramm was the closest friend Karl and Jenny had in London then, and he told me things that made my heart bleed. Why, when a little baby was born to them, soon after they came to London, there was no money for a doc-

tor, nor even to buy a cheap cradle for the little thing.

"For years that poverty continued. I used to see Karl pretty near every day until I fell and hurt my head and broke my leg in two places and was kept in the hospital many months. Barbara had to go out to work then, washing clothes for richer folks, and we couldn't offer to help dear old Karl as we would. So we just pretended that we didn't know anything about the poverty that was making him look so haggard and old. Karl would have died from the worry, I believe, if it had not been for the children. They kept him young and cheered him up. He might not have had anything but dry bread to eat for days, but he would come down the street laughing like a great big boy, a crowd of children tugging at his coat and crying 'Daddy Marx! Daddy Marx!

Daddy Marx!' at the top of their little voices.

"He used to come and see me at the hospital sometimes. No matter how tired and worried he might be—and I could tell that pretty well by looking at his face when he didn't know that I was looking—he always was cheerful with me. He wanted to cheer me up, you see, so he told me all the encouraging news about the movement—though there wasn't very much that was encouraging—and then he would crack jokes and tell stories that made me laugh so loud that all the other patients in the room would get to laughing too.

"I told him one day about a little German lad in a bed at the lower end of the ward. Poor little chap, he had been operated on several times, but there was no hope. He was bound to die, the nurse told me. When I told Karl the

tears came into his eyes and he kept on moaning, 'Poor little chap! So young! Poor little chap!' He went down and talked with him for an hour or more, and I could hear the boy's laughter ring through the long hospital ward. We'd never heard him laugh before, for no one ever came to see him, poor lonesome little fellow.

"Karl always used to spend some of his time with the little chap after that. He would bring books and read to him in his mother tongue, or tell him wonderful stories. The poor little chap was so happy to see him and always used to kiss 'Uncle Nick,' as Karl taught the boy to call him. And when the little fellow died, Karl wept just as though the lad had been his own kin, and insisted upon following him to the grave."

"Ah, that was great and noble, Hans!

How he must have felt the great universal heart-ache!"

"I used to go to the German Communist Club to hear Karl lecture. That was years later, in the winter of 1856, I think. Karl had been staying away from the club for three or four years. He was sick of their faction fights, and disgusted with the hot-heads who were always crying for violent revolution. I saw him very often during the time that he kept away from the club, when Kinkel and Willich and other romantic middle-class men held sway there. Karl would say to me: 'Bah! It's all froth, Hans, every bit of it is froth. They cry out for revolution because the words seem big and impressive, but they mustn't be regarded seriously. Pop-gun revolutionists they are!'

"Well, as I was saying, I heard the lectures on political economy which Karl

gave at the club along in fifty-six and fifty-seven. He lectured to us just as he talked to the juries, quietly and slowly—like a teacher. Then he would ask us questions to find out how much we knew, and the man who showed that he had not been listening carefully got a scolding. Karl would look right at him and say: 'And did you *really* listen to the lecture, Comrade So-and-So?' A fine teacher he was.

"I think that Karl's affairs improved a bit just them. Engels used to help him, too. At any rate, he and his family moved out into the suburbs and I did not see him so often. My family had grown large by that time, and I had to drop agitation for a few years to feed and clothe my little ones. But I used to visit Karl sometimes on Sundays, and then we'd talk over all that had happened in connection with the

movement. I used to take him the best cigars I could get, and he always relished them.

"For Karl was a great smoker. Nearly always he had a cigar in his mouth, and, ugh!—what nasty things he had to smoke. We used to call his cigars 'Marx's rope-ends,' and they were as bad as their name. That the terrible things he had to smoke, because they were cheap, injured his health there can be no doubt at all. I used to say that it was helping the movement to take him a box of decent cigars, for it was surely saving him from smoking old 'rope-ends.'

"Poor Jenny! She was so grateful whenever I brought Karl a box of cigars. 'So long as he must smoke, friend Fritzsche, it is better that he should have something decent to smoke. The cheap trash he smokes is bad for him,

I'm sure.' She knew, poor thing, that the poverty he endured for the great Cause was killing Karl by inches, as you might say. And I knew it, too, laddie, and it made my heart bleed."

"Ah, he was a martyr, Hans—a martyr to the cause of liberty. And 'the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church,' always and everywhere," said the Young Comrade.

VI

Old Hans was silent for a few seconds. He gazed at the photograph above his bench like one enraptured. The Young Comrade kept silent, too, watching old Hans. A curious smile played about the old man's face. It was he who broke the silence at length.

"Of course, you've heard about the

International, lad? Karl had that picture taken just about the time that the International was started. Always promised me a picture he had, for years and years. And when he brought me that one Sunday he seemed half ashamed of himself, as if he thought it was too sentimental a thing for a serious man to do. 'You'll soon get tired looking at it, Hans,' he said.

"Ach, I remember that afternoon as though it were only day before yesterday. We were sitting smoking and talking after dinner when Karl said: 'Hans, I've made up my mind that it is time things begun to move a bit—in connection with the movement I mean. We must unite, Hans. All the workers ought to unite—can unite—*must* unite! We've got a good start in the visit of these French and German workingmen to the Universal Exhibition. The

bourgeoisie have shown the way. It must be done.' Then he explained to me how the movement was to be launched, and I promised to help as much as possible in my union. Karl always wanted to get the support of the unions, and many a time did he come to me to get me to introduce some motion in my union.

"It was that way when the great Civil War broke out in America. Karl was mad at the way in which Gladstone and the middle class in general sided with the slave-holders of the South. You see, he not only took the side of the slaves, but he loved President Lincoln. He seemed never to get tired of praising Lincoln. One day he came to me and said with that quiet manner he had when he was most in earnest, 'Hans, we must do something to offset Gladstone's damned infernal support of the slave-

traders. We must show President Lincoln that the working class in this country feel and know that he is in the right. And Abraham Lincoln belongs to us, Hans; he's a son of the working class.'

"He said a lot more in praise of Lincoln, and told me how proud he was that the German Socialists had gone to the war, all enlisted in the Northern army; said he'd like to join with Weydemeyer, his old friend, who was fighting under Fremont. So earnest he was about it! Nobody could have guessed that the war meant ruin to him by cutting off his only regular income, the five dollars a week he got for writing for the *New York Tribune*—I think that was the name of the paper.

"Well, he begged me to get resolutions passed at our union condemning Gladstone and supporting President Lincoln, and I believe that our union

was the first body of workingmen in England to pass such resolutions. But Karl didn't stop at that. He got the International to take the matter up with the different workingmen's societies, and meetings were held all over the country. And he kept so much in the background that very few people ever knew that it was Karl Marx who turned the tide of opinion in England to the side of Lincoln. And when Lincoln was murdered by that crazy actor, Booth, Karl actually cried. He made a beautiful speech, and wrote resolutions which were adopted at meetings all over the country. Ah, boy, Lincoln appreciated the support we gave him in those awful days of the war, and Karl showed me the reply Lincoln sent to the General Council thanking them for it.

"Karl was always like that; always guiding the working people to do the

right thing, and always letting other people get the credit and the glory. He planned and directed all the meetings of the workers demanding manhood suffrage, in 1866, but he never got the credit of it. All for the cause, he was, and never cared for personal glory. For years he gave all his time to the International and never got a penny for all he did, though his enemies used to say that he was 'getting rich out of the movement.'

"Ach, that used to make me mad—the way they lied about Karl. The papers used to print stories about the 'Brimstone League,' a sort of 'inner circle' connected with the International, though we all knew there was never such a thing in existence. Karl was accused of trying to plan murders and bloody revolutions, the very thing he hated and feared above everything else.

Always fighting those who talked that way, he was; said they were spies and hired agents of the enemy, trying to bring the movement to ruin. Didn't he oppose Weitling and Herwegh and Bakunin on that very ground?

"I was with Karl when Lassalle visited him, in 1862, and heard what he said then about foolish attempts to start revolutions by the sword. Lassalle had sent a Captain Schweigert to Karl a little while before that with a letter, begging Karl to help the Captain raise the money to buy a lot of guns for an insurrection. Karl had refused to have anything to do with the scheme, and Lassalle was mad about it. 'Your ways are too slow for me, my dear Marx,' he said. 'Why, it'll take a whole generation to develop a political party of the proletariat strong enough to do anything.'

"Karl smiled in that quiet way he had and said: 'Yes, it's slow enough, friend Lassalle, slow enough. But we want brains for the foundation of our revolution—brains, not powder. We must have patience, lots of patience. Mushrooms grow up in a night and last only a day; oaks take a hundred years to grow, but the wood lasts a thousand years. And it's oaks we want, not mushrooms.' "

"How like Marx that was, Hans," said the Young Comrade then, "how patient and far-seeing! And what did Lassalle think of that?"

"He never understood Karl, I think. Anyhow, Karl told me that Lassalle ceased to be his friend after that meeting. There was no quarrel, you understand, only Lassalle realized that he and Karl were far apart in their views. 'Lassalle is a clever man all

right,' Karl used to say, 'but he wants twelve o'clock at eleven, like an impatient child.' And there's lots of folks like Lassalle in that respect, my lad; folks that want oaks to grow in a night like mushrooms.

"Well, I stayed in the International until the very last, after the Hague Congress when it was decided to make New York the headquarters. That was a hard blow to me, lad. It looked to me as if Karl had made a mistake. I felt that the International was practically killed when the General Council was moved to America, and told Karl so. But he knew that as well as I did, only he couldn't help himself.

" 'Yes, Hans, I'm afraid you're right. The International can't amount to much under the circumstances. But it had to be, Hans, it had to be. My health is very poor, and I'm about done

for, so far as fighting is concerned. I simply can't keep on fighting Bakunin and his crowd, Hans, and if I drop the fight the International will pass into Bakunin's control. And I'd rather see the organization die in America than live with Bakunin at the head; it's better so, better so, Hans.' And it was then, when I heard him talk like that, and saw how old-looking he had grown in a few months, that I knew we must soon lose Karl."

VII

"But he did not die soon—he lived more than ten years after that, Hans," said the Young Comrade. "And ten years is a good long time."

"Ach, ten years! But what sort of years were they? Tell me that," de-

manded old Hans with trembling voice. "Ten years of sickness and misery—ten years of perdition, that's what they were, my lad! Didn't I see him waste away like a plant whose roots are gnawed by the worms? Didn't I see his frame shake to pieces almost when that cough took hold of him? Aye, didn't I often think that I'd be glad to hear that he was dead—glad for his own sake, to think that he was out of pain at last?

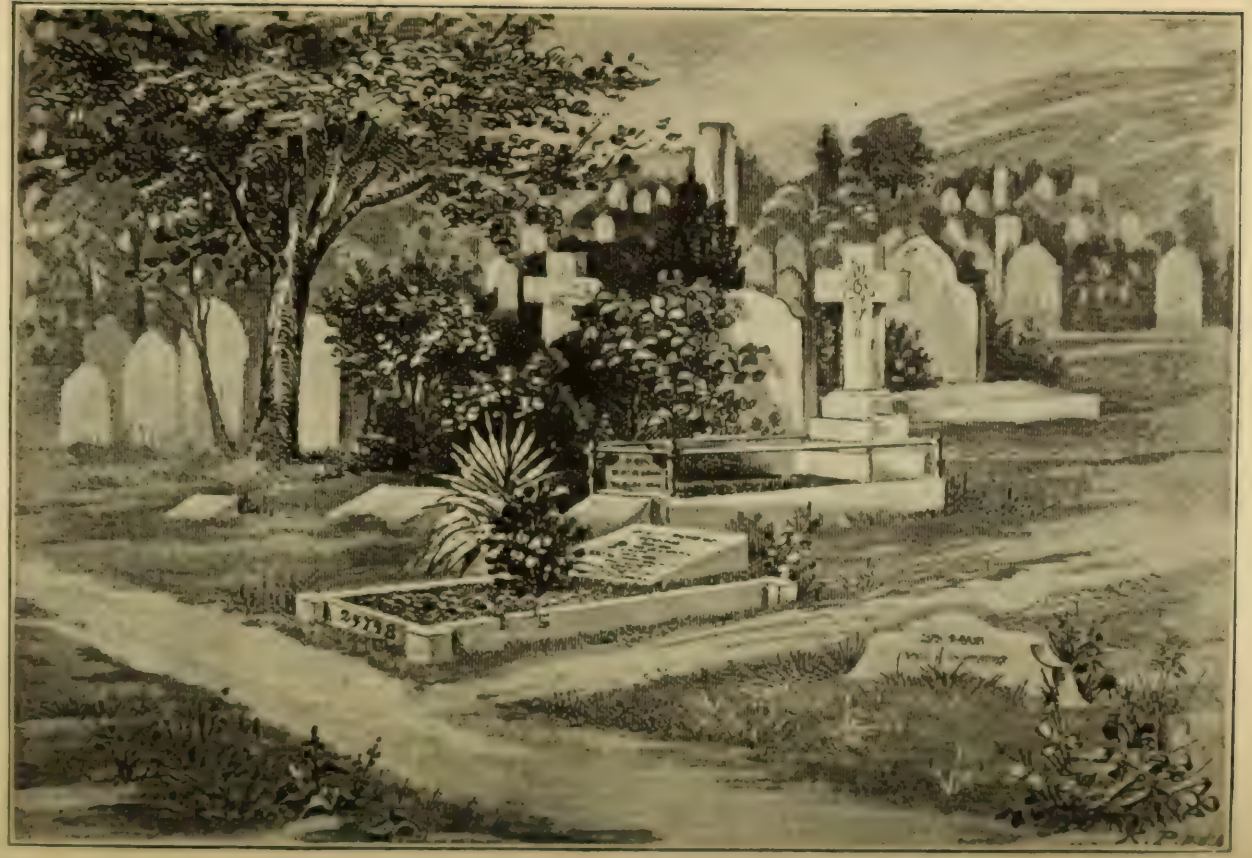
"Yes, he lived ten years, but he was dying all the while. He must have been in pain pretty nearly all the time, every minute an agony! 'Oh, I'd put an end to it all, Hans, if I didn't have to finish *Capital*,' he said to me once as we walked over Hampstead Heath, he leaning upon my arm. 'It's Hell to suffer so, year after year, but I must finish that book. Nothing I've ever done means so much as that to the move-

ment, and nobody else can do it. I must live for *that,* even though every breath is an agony.'

"But he didn't live to finish his task, after all. It was left for Engels to put the second and third volumes in shape. A mighty good thing it was for the movement that there was an Engels to do it, I can tell you. Nobody else could have done it. But Engels was like a twin brother to Karl. Some of the comrades were a bit jealous sometimes, and used to call Karl and Engels the 'Siamese twins,' but that made no difference to anybody. If it hadn't been for Engels Karl wouldn't have lived so long as he did, and half his work would never have been done. I never got so close to the heart of Engels as I did to Karl, but I loved him for Karl's sake, and because of the way he always stood by Karl through thick and thin.

"I can't bear to tell about the last couple of years—how I used to find Karl sick abed in one room and his wife, the lovely Jenny, in another room tortured by cancer. Terrible it was, and I used to go away from the house hoping that I might hear they were both dead and out of their misery forever. Only Engels seemed to think that Karl would get better. He got mad as a hatter when I said one day that Karl couldn't live. But when Jenny died Engels said to me after the funeral, 'It's all over with Marx now, friend Fritzsche; his life is finished, too.' And I knew that Engels spoke the truth.

"And then Karl died. He died sitting in his arm chair, about three o'clock in the afternoon of the fourteenth of March, 1883. I heard the news that evening from Engels and went over to the house in Maitland



THE MARX FAMILY GRAVE IN HIGHGATE CEMETERY.

Park Road, and that night I saw him stretched out upon the bed, the old familiar smile upon his lips. I couldn't say a word to Engels or to poor Eleanor Marx—I could only press their hands in silence and fight to keep back the sobs and tears.

"And then on the Saturday, at noon, he was buried in Highgate Cemetery, in the same grave with his wife. And while Engels was speaking over the grave, telling what a wonderful philosopher Karl was, my mind was wandering back over the years to Treves. Once more we were boys playing together, or fighting because he would play with little Jenny von Westphalen; once more I seemed to hear Karl telling stories in the schoolyard as in the old days. Once again it seemed as if we were back in the old town, marching through the streets shouting out the

verses Karl wrote about the old teacher, poor old Herr von Holst.

"And then the scene changed and I was in Bingen with my Barbara, laughing into the faces of Karl and his Jenny, and Karl was picking the bits of rice from his pockets and laughing at the joke, while poor Jenny blushed crimson. What Engels said at the grave I couldn't tell; I didn't hear it at all, for my mind was far away. I could only think of the living Karl, not of the corpse they were giving back to Mother Earth.

"It seemed to me that the scene changed again, and we were back in Cologne—Karl addressing the judge and jury, defending the working class, I listening and applauding like mad. And then the good old Lessner took my arm and led me away.

"Ah, lad, it was terrible, terrible, going home that afternoon and thinking of

Karl lying there in the cold ground. The sun could no longer shine for me, and even Barbara and the little grandchild, our Barbara's little Gretchen, couldn't cheer me. Karl was a great philosopher, as Engels said there at the graveside, but he was a greater man, a greater comrade and friend. They talk about putting up a bronze monument somewhere to keep his memory fresh, but that would be foolish. Little men's memories can be kept alive by bronze monuments, but such men as Karl need no monuments. So long as the great struggle for human liberty endures Karl's name will live in the hearts of men.

"Aye, and in the distant ages—when the struggle is over—when happy men and women read with wondering hearts of the days of pain which we endure—then Karl's name will still be remem-

bered. Nobody will know then that I, poor old Hans Fritzsche, went to school with Karl; that I played with him—fought with him—loved him for nearly sixty years. But no matter; they can never know Karl as I knew him."

Tears ran down the old man's cheeks as he lapsed into silence once more, and the Young Comrade gently pressed one of the withered and knotted hands to his lips and went out into the night.

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